

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
ACDA-07 OES-07 ERDA-05 TRSE-00 DHA-02 /074 W
-----097529 120204Z /73

R 111550Z AUG 77
FM AMEMBASSY BERLIN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5374
INFO USIA WASHDC
AMEMBASSY WARSAW
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY SOFIA

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E.O.11652; N/A
TAGS; PGOV, GE
SUBJECT; GDR MEDIA OPENS THE FLOODGATES ON THE
NEUTRON BOMB

1. IN RECENT WEEKS THE GDR MEDIA HAS MOUNTED A
STEADY AND INCREASING BARRAGE OF ARTICLES AND COMMENTARIES
TAKING THE U.S. TO TASK FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE
NEUTRON BOMB AND OTHER ARMS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS.
FOR SOME TIME THE GDR PRESS CONTENTED ITSELF WITH
REPEATING CRITICAL STORIES FROM THE WESTERN AND
SOVIET PRESS. THIS PRACTICE HAS CONTINUED WITH
EMPHASIS ON THE BREADTH AND SCOPE OF THE REACTION TO
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THE NEUTRON BOMB IN THE U.S. JAPAN, WESTERN EUROPE,
AND IN THE SOCIALIST STATES.

2. HOWEVER, IN RECENT DAYS WE HAVE SEEN THE FIRST
IN A SERIES OF COMMENTARIES, BOTH SIGNED AND UNSIGNED,
DIRECTLY CRITICAL OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT ON THIS
ISSUE AND LINKING THE NEUTRON BOMB WITH THE HELSINKI

FINAL ACT AND THE FOLLOW-ON CONFERENCE IN BELGRADE. THE STANDARD LINE HAS BEEN THAT THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEUTRON WEAPONS, CRUISE MISSILES AND OTHER "WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION" ARE CONTRARY TO THE MOST FUNDAMENTAL OF HUMAN RIGHTS, "THE RIGHTS OF LIFE AND PEACE." A FREQUENTLY REPEATED THEME IS THAT SUCH PROGRAMS ARE INCONSISTENT WITH THE SPIRIT OF THE HELSINKI FINAL ACT AND ARE, OF COURSE, CONTRARY TO THE POLICIES PURSUED BY THE SOVIET UNION AND ITS SOCIALIST BROTHER STATES. WHILE COMMENTARIES IN PARTY AND GOVERNMENT ORGANS REMAIN OVERTLY OPTIMISTIC ON THE RESULTS OF THE BELGRADE CONFERENCE, THE IMPLICATION IS CLEAR THAT IT IS THE WESTERN STATES, AND PARTICULARLY THE UNITED STATES, WHO ARE VIOLATING THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF THE ENTIRE WORLD THROUGH THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW WEAPONS TECHNOLOGIES.

3. AN UNUSUAL ASPECT OF THIS MEDIA CAMPAIGN BY GDR STANDARDS HAS BEEN THE OCCASIONAL LINKING OF THE ANTI-NEUTRON BOMB THEME WITH DIRECT CRITICISM OF THE PRESIDENT. A GOOD EXAMPLE OF THIS IS AN ARTICLE IN THE CURRENT ISSUE OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY-BACKED HORIZONT ENTITLED "HOW MORAL IS THIS POLICY?" THE ARTICLE FORTHRIGHTLY LINKS THE PRESIDENT'S INTEREST IN HUMAN RIGHTS WITH A SARCASTIC DESCRIPTION OF THE "CLEAN" CHARACTER OF THE NEUTRON BOMB AND A DENUNCIATION OF U.S. AND NATO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ARMAMENTS PROGRAMS IN GENERAL. WHILE CALLING FOR A HALT TO THE ARMS RACE AND NOTING WITH APPROVAL THE POSITIVE STEPS TAKEN IN THIS REGARD BY THE SOCIALIST STATES, THE ARTICLE POINTEDLY ASKS, "DOESN'T THE FINAL ACT OF HELSINKI CARRY THE SIGNATURE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE USA?"

4. IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE PRESS AND RADIO/TELEVISION CAMPAIGN THE EMBASSY HAS ALSO BEEN RECEIVING AN INCREASING NUMBER OF LETTERS AND PETITIONS ON THE NEUTRON BOMB QUESTION. (SEE BERLIN A-72 OF 11 AUGUST 1977.) NEUES DEUTSCHLAND OF 11 AUGUST PUBLISHED THE TEXTS OF 14 SUCH LETTERS ACROSS THE TOP OF THE SECOND PAGE. THIS PROBABLY REPRESENTS THE OPENING SALVOES OF A GOVERNMENT SPONSORED CAMPAIGN TO SHOW BROAD INTEREST, AND INDIGNATION, ON THE NEUTRON BOMB ISSUE BY INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS WITHIN THE GDR. IN ONE INSTANCE, A GROUP OF STUDENTS BROUGHT A PETITION WITH 65 SIGNATURES TO THE EMBASSY ON AUGUST 8 WHICH THEY DISCUSSED WITH AN EMBASSY OFFICER IN POLITE AND RESTRAINED TERMS. THE STUDENTS WERE GIVEN COPIES OF EDITORIALS FROM THE U.S. PRESS INDICATING

THAT THERE WERE DIFFERENT SIDES TO THE QUESTION AND
THAT NO FINAL DECISION ON PRODUCTION HAD YET BEEN MADE.
THEY APPEARED SOMEWHAT SURPRISED BY THIS BUT ALSO VERY
INTERESTED.

5. IN THE GDR THE GROUNDWORK IS CLEARLY BEING LAID
TO SUPPORT WHATEVER TACTICS THE SOVIET UNION
AND ITS ALLIES MAY CHOOSE TO EMPLOY ATBELGRADE. IF
THE SOVIETS DECIDE TO MOUNT A MAJOR COUNTEROFFENSIVE
AGAINST THE WEST ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE THE GDR MEDIA
WILL HAVE ALREADY ESTABLISHED THE PROPER "DOCUMENTARY
EVIDENCE" OF U.S. CULPABILITY ON THIS ISSUE. POLANSKY

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, PUBLIC ATTITUDES, NUCLEAR BOMBS
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Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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Disposition Remarks:
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TAGS: PGOV, SOPN, GC, US
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